



MEDINA COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

Probate and Juvenile Divisions

93 Public Square, Room 104, Medina, Ohio 44256

KEVIN W. DUNN
Judge

MEDIA RELEASE

March 27, 2019

Music Therapy Begins at Medina County Juvenile Detention Center for Residents



Bono once said, “Music can change the world because it can change people.” That is the hope with the new music therapy program at the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC). The MCJDC began music therapy for residents earlier this year with the collaborative efforts of the Cleveland Music Therapy Consortium, comprised of the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music and the College of Wooster.

Madeleine Silver-Riskin, a senior student music therapist at the College of Wooster, comes to the facility every Sunday for music therapy with residents who have earned the opportunity through positive behavior, in groups of up to five youth at a time. During the therapy session, the youth write lyrics or poems that are then accompanied by instruments. Silver-Riskin plays guitar while the residents keep beat on drums she provides.

According to the American Music Therapy Association, music therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a professional. Music therapy interventions are designed to promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication and promote physical rehabilitation.

Silver-Riskin said her goal with each session is to increase creativity and emotional regulation by giving the youth opportunities to create their own music.

“The youth have been surprisingly receptive to the new program singing and playing drums and creating poems,” said Ron Stollar, Medina County Juvenile Detention Center Superintendent. “They are writing songs that have meaning to them and struggles they have faced in their lives.”

Community members have donated a keyboard to the program and Stollar hopes to inherit additional instruments, usable or not. He said that anything not playable can be used in the facility’s art therapy program to create new pieces for the Art Experience theme, *Where Words Fail, Music Speaks*, at the MCJDC in September.

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Silver-Riskin will be graduating in May and will go on to complete a six to nine month American Music Therapy Association approved internship before qualifying to sit for the music therapist board certification exam. She explained that every Spring, a new class of students will have the opportunity to complete their clinical hours at the MCJDC and hopes that the facility will expand the music therapy program to include a credentialed music therapist working alongside the students.

Stollar said the long-term plan has always been to include a board certified music therapist, but there are financial aspects to figure out. Stollar also said that he is already seeing a positive reaction to having a student music therapist work with the youth, and that the focus in the early stages of the program is to let the residents express themselves and promote their creativity.

“We can all remember a song at an impactful moment for the rest of our lives,” Stollar said. “Most of these kids have had challenging childhoods and trauma in their lives, and we truly believe music can help.”

Anyone interested in donating instruments to the program may contact the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center at (330) 764-8408 to speak with Superintendent Ron Stollar or Assistant Superintendent Megan Millikin.

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